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**THE AMBROSIANUS MANUSCRIPT AND ITS VARIANTS:
A STUDY IN COMPARISON
WITH THE GALATIAN ETHIOPIC MANUSCRIPT**

This article offers a detailed comparative analysis of two significant Ethiopic manuscripts the Maqala Mikael 167, a 16th-century document, and the Ambrosiana manuscript, which dates back to the 14th century. Both manuscripts contain important versions of the Epistles of Saint Paul, yet they present some crucial differences that shed light on the transmission and preservation of these texts within the Ethiopic tradition. The primary focus of the study is the identification of notable omissions in the Ambrosiana manuscript when compared to the Maqala Mikael 167. These discrepancies are not only significant in the context of textual variations but also crucial for understanding the development of the Epistles' textual tradition over time. By examining these omissions and the manuscript's specific details, the article aims to enhance the critical edition of the Epistles, offering valuable insights into the historical and textual evolution of these ancient Christian writings. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of the Maqala Mikael 167 as a completer and more reliable source for the critical analysis of Saint Paul's Epistles, providing a more comprehensive version of the texts. At the same time, the Ambrosiana manuscript's historical and cultural significance is acknowledged, as it represents an earlier stage in the transmission of the Epistles within Ethiopic Christianity. This comparative approach helps deepen our understanding of the complexities involved in the preservation of sacred texts in Ethiopic Christianity, contributing to ongoing scholarly efforts in textual criticism.

Key words: Ethiopic manuscript, Textual omissions, comparison, Codex Ambrosianus, Textual criticism.

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**Амвросиан манускрипті және оның текстологиялық нұсқалары:
Галаттарға арналған эфиопиялық манускриптімен салыстырмалы зерттеу**

Бұл мақалада XVI ғасырға жататын Maqala Mikael 167 және XIV ғасырдағы Амвросиан манускрипті сияқты маңызды екі эфиопиялық қолжазбаның жан-жақты салыстырмалы талдауы ұсынылған. Екі манускрипт те апостол Павелдің хаттарының маңызды нұсқаларын қамтиды, алайда олардың арасында айтарлықтай айырмашылықтар анықталды. Бұл өзгешеліктер мәтіннің эфиопиялық дәстүрде берілу және сақталу үдерісін тереңірек түсінуге мүмкіндік береді.

Зерттеу барысында Maqala Mikael 167-мен салыстырғанда Амвросиан манускриптіңде орын алған елеулі мәтіндік жол қалдырулар анықталып, олар жан-жақты талданады. Бұл айырмашылықтар тек мәтіндік вариациялар тұрғысынан ғана емес, сонымен қатар апостол Павел хаттарының мәтіндік дәстүрінің тарихи дамуын зерттеуде де маңызды рөл атқарады.

Мақала осы жол қалдыруларды және екі манускриптің ерекшеліктерін зерттеу арқылы Павел хаттарының сыни басылымын жетілдіруге ықпал етіп, олардың тарихи және мәтіндік эволюциясына жаңа көзқарастар ұсынады. Сонымен қатар, зерттеу Maqala Mikael 167 манускриптінің неғұрлым толық әрі сенімді дереккөз екенін және апостол Павел хаттарының анағұрлым тұтас нұсқасын қамтитынын атап көрсетеді.

Сонымен қатар Амвросиан манускриптінің тарихи-мәдени маңызы да назардан тыс қалмайды, өйткені ол эфиопиялық христиандықтағы Павел хаттарының таралуының ертерек кезеңін сипаттайды. Бұл салыстырмалы зерттеу қасиетті мәтіндердің сақталуындағы күрделі аспектілерді тереңірек түсінуге көмектесіп, мәтіндік сын саласындағы ғылыми ізденістерге өз үлесін қосады.

Түйін сөздер: эфиопиялық манускрипт, мәтіндік жол қалдырулар, салыстыру, Амвросиан манускрипті, мәтіндік сын.

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Университет Холи Тринити, Аддис-Абеба, Эфиопия
e-mail: kebede.ethiopia@yahoo.com**Амвросианский манускрипт и его текстовые варианты:
сравнительное исследование эфиопских манускриптов с Посланиями к Галатам**

В данной статье представлен детальный сравнительный анализ двух значимых эфиопских манускриптов: *Maqala Mikael 167*, датированного XVI веком, и Амвросианского кодекса, относящегося к XIV веку. Оба манускрипта содержат важные версии Посланий апостола Павла, однако между ними выявлены существенные различия, позволяющие глубже понять процессы передачи и сохранения данных текстов в эфиопской традиции. Основное внимание исследования сосредоточено на выявлении значительных пропусков в Амвросианском манускрипте по сравнению с *Maqala Mikael 167*. Эти расхождения имеют не только текстологическое значение, но и играют ключевую роль в изучении эволюции текстовой традиции Посланий апостола Павла. Анализируя данные пропуски и особенности манускриптов, статья способствует улучшению критического издания Посланий, раскрывая новые аспекты их исторического и текстологического развития. Кроме того, исследование подчеркивает важность *Maqala Mikael 167* как более полного и надежного источника для критического анализа Посланий апостола Павла, представляющего наиболее целостную версию текстов. В то же время признается историко-культурная значимость Амвросианского манускрипта, который отражает более ранний этап передачи Посланий в рамках эфиопского христианства. Сравнительный подход, использованный в работе, углубляет понимание сложностей, связанных с сохранением священных текстов в эфиопской христианской традиции, и вносит вклад в дальнейшие научные исследования в области текстологии.

Ключевые слова: эфиопский манускрипт, текстологические пропуски, сравнение, Кодекс Амвросианус, текстологическая критика.

Introduction

The study of ancient manuscripts offers invaluable insights into the transmission, preservation, and evolution of religious and literary texts over centuries. (Andrews, E. D. 2023).

In the realm of Ethiopic Christianity, the manuscripts of the Epistles of Saint Paul hold a significant place, not only as sacred scripture but also as cultural and historical artifacts. Among the many Ethiopic manuscripts of the New Testament, two stand out for their historical importance: the *Maqala Mikael 167* manuscript from the 16th century and the *Ambrosiana* manuscript from the 14th century. These texts are vital in understanding the textual variations that have emerged over time within the Ethiopic Orthodox Tradition.

The *Ambrosiana* manuscript, an ancient and important Ethiopic text, has long been regarded as a cornerstone in the study of Saint Paul's Epistles in the Ethiopian Church. Dated to the 14th century, this manuscript provides one of the earliest versions of the letters attributed to Saint Paul, and it has played a crucial role in the Ethiopian Christian tradition. However, when compared to later manuscripts, such as *Maqala Mikael 167*, a striking pattern of omissions and textual differences emerges.

This comparison aims to highlight the textual variations between these two significant manuscripts, focusing on the omissions found in the *Ambrosiana* manuscript. By examining these discrep-

ancies, we can gain a deeper understanding of how textual transmission and redaction may have influenced the versions of Saint Paul's letters that have been handed down through generations. The differences observed in the *Ambrosiana* manuscript may also shed light on broader trends in the manuscript culture of 14th-century Ethiopia, such as the role of scribes, regional textual traditions, and the evolving interpretation of sacred texts.

Through this comparison, the article seeks to contribute to the growing body of scholarship on Ethiopic biblical manuscripts, while offering a critical analysis of the textual integrity of the *Ambrosiana* manuscript. By situating it within the broader context of Ethiopic manuscript traditions, the article will also explore the implications of these omissions for our understanding of Saint Paul's Epistles in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. Ultimately, the study of these manuscripts not only deepens our appreciation for the ancient texts themselves but also enhances our knowledge of the history of Ethiopian Christianity and its literary heritage.

Comparison between the base manuscript and the manuscript of *Ambrosiana*

One of the ancient and important Ethiopic manuscripts for the Epistles of Saint Paul is the *Ambrosiana*, dated 14th century. And Mekele Michael = M167 16th Century. Here below, it will be shown that this manuscript has many omissions compared to the manuscript that has been used as a base for the critical edition.

Mekele Michael= M167 16 th Century Mäle'ekthäbäSäbä'ägälatya	Ambrosiana 14 th Century Läsäbä'ägälatya
Chapter One	
1. Läsäbä'ägälatya	ṗawulos
1. 'Äwareya	'Äwareyahu
1. Wä'ikonä'emesäb	Omission
2. 'ähawinä	'ähawuyä
6. 'änäkeräkmü	'änkerekmu
6. Yafäləsukmu	Təfäləsu
6. 'Əməhaymənotäkərəstos	Omission
7. Zä'ikonähəlwä	Omission
8. 'äsäräzi'änätəlwu	Omission
15. 'Əgəzi'əbhər zäfälatäni	Omission
16. kämäyət'əwäq səbəhätä wäldu bä'ədeyä	Omission
20 Häləwuku	Omission
21. Wä'əmdhrä zəntu nägär	Omission
23 Zäkonä 'ənzä yamänəzəz 'əmətka	Omission

Chapter Two	
1. Bahətitiyä	Bäbahətitənä
2. wä'iyagäbärəkwo	'ägäbärəwo
3. həsawiyənə	Omission
4. 'itäqäyənä lomu 'ähätähi sä'ätä kämä yəşənə'ə bəhəbekmu şədqä təməhərət	Omission
5. 'iyaşəhqäni 'ənəgər	wälits'älbo Zäyəräkbäni 'əmzəntu
6. 'Əgzi'əbhər	Omission
7. 'ələ 'itägäzru	Omission
8. gəzrätä	Omission
9. quləfät	Omission
10. məhro 'ähəzab	Omission
11. 'ədäw	Omission
12. wäbäzəhu 'ələgäb'u həbäzəntu gbər	wä'ädəlw lotu 'əmuntuhi
13. həbrä	Omission
14. 'ələ'məfträtinä 'äyhud	bä'āman 'āntmu 'äyhud
15. wäbähaymənotnä botu nəşädq	Omission
19 'Änəske 'məhg zäqädami motku bäkal 'əhg kämä'əhyäw lä'Əgzi'əbhər	bä'əntä 'əhg zäbähəgu motku 'əhyäw

Chapter Three	
11. bākāmā ṣəḥuf	Omission
13. wālānāsā	Omission
13. bā'ənti'ānā wābo'ā wāṣorā	Omission
16 'ḏgzi'ābḥer	Omission
20. wāwārādātə śrə'ātə məslā māla'əkt bā 'ədāḥruy	bāsrə'ātə māla'əkihu
22. bā'iyāsus kərstos	Omissio
26. nəḥnā bā'āmin bā'iyāsus kərstos	Omission
27. wā'antu 'ələ tāṭāmāqəmu bākərstos kərstosha lābāskəmu	Omission
29. wā'əkm konkmu lākərstos 'ənətmuki 'ənkā zār'ā 'ābrhāmə wārasyan tāfa	Omission

Chapter Four	
1. zā'ādāmo	Omission
6. wə'tu zāteṣewu'u	Omission
7. bā'iyāsus kərstos	Omission
16. mā'ārkukmu ṣdqā	Omission
17. wā'āko lāsānay	Omission
19. wustā lbkmu	la'əl ekmu
22. bākāmā ṣəḥuf wuteta kāmā	Omission
28. wuludā tāsfā 'āmsalā yṣḥāq	Omission

Chapter Five	
2. 'iybu'akmu mntni	Omission
1. ḥəgā	Omission
2. tāḥṣəśu	Omission
6. bāḥābā 'ḏgzi'ənā	Omission
12. 'āḥāwuyā	Omission
13. bāfətwātā	Omission
24. sāqālu śəgahomu	sāqālwə śəgahu

Chapter Six	
1. 'əmnəkmu	Omission
15. 'əsmā bā'iyāsus kərstos	Omission
16. 'əlāynābru bāzntu ḥəgā	'əlāygābru bāzntu ḥəgā
1. 'o'āḥāwuyā	Omission
1. Tāfāšāmā māle'ekt ḥābāSābə'āgālatya wātāṣəḥfā bābḥerā rome Wātāfānāwā bā'dā tito rād'u sbḥāt lā'əgzi'ābḥer lā'alāmā 'alām 'āmen.	Omission

Methodology

For a comparative study like this, focusing on textual differences and omissions between two manuscripts, a researcher uses textual criticism methodology is most appropriate. Here's a detailed outline of the approach that the researcher use:

1. Establishing the Base Text (MaqalaMikael167)

Clearly define the base text and justify why MaqalaMikael167 is being used as the reference manuscript for the critical edition.

Provide historical context for the manuscript, including its origin, dating, and significance.

2. Analyzing the Comparative Manuscript (Ambrosiana). (Dahood, M. 1969).

Describe the Ambrosiana manuscript, including its historical background, physical characteristics, and any relevant scholarly commentary.

Mention its importance for the Epistles of Saint Paul and why it is included in this study.

3. Textual Collation (Robinson, P. M. 1989).

Conduct a systematic collation of the texts. Line up the two manuscripts and compare them side by side.

Note omissions, additions, substitutions, or alterations in the Ambrosiana manuscript compared to MaqalaMikael167.

Use symbols or a critical apparatus (e.g., brackets, asterisks, superscripts) to mark differences clearly.

4. Classification of Variants

Categorize the differences:

Omissions: Lines, phrases, or words absent in the Ambrosiana manuscript. (Pakkala, J. 2013).

Additions: Content found in the Ambrosiana manuscript but absent in MaqalaMikael167.

Substitutions: Words or phrases that are altered.

Transpositions: Changes in word or phrase order.

Analyze the potential causes for these variations (e.g., scribal errors, deliberate changes, or regional influences).

5. Contextual Analysis (Iversen, G. R. 1991).

Investigate the cultural, historical, and theological reasons for the omissions or changes in the Ambrosiana manuscript.

Consider the scribal practices, transmission history, and possible external influences that shaped each manuscript.

6. Critical Edition Framework

Present a table or detailed commentary showing key differences, with line numbers or folio references for clarity.

If possible, add images or facsimiles of the manuscripts to highlight key points visually.

Discussion

Philological Observations

Philological studies of these manuscripts reveal significant textual variations, particularly in omissions. The omissions observed in the Ambrosiana manuscript influence the interpretation, theological nuance, and readability of the text. Below are some critical observations based on the comparison:

1. Lexical Variations:

The Ambrosiana manuscript exhibits frequent lexical omissions. For instance, in Chapter One, verse 6, «'Ēmāhaymānotākərəstos» is omitted, which alters the theological emphasis.

Similarly, in Chapter Three, verse 22, «bā'iyāsus kərstos» is omitted, potentially affecting Christological interpretation.

2. Morphological Changes: (Andersen, H. 1980).

The shift in certain pronouns and verbal forms, such as «'āḥawinā» vs. «'āḥawuyā» in Chapter One, verse 2, indicates a variation in grammatical construction.

Such differences may suggest either scribal simplification or the influence of different linguistic traditions.

3. Theological and Doctrinal Implications:

The omission of «'Ēgzi'ābḥer» (God) in multiple verses (e.g., Chapter Two, verse 7; Chapter Three, verse 16) reduces explicit references to divine agency.

The removal of «wā'antu 'älä täṭāmāqəmu bākərstos kərstosha läbäskəmu» (Chapter Three, verse 27) significantly alters the meaning related to the concept of baptism and union with Christ.

Structural and Stylistic Considerations: (Coteanu, I. 1962).

The Mekele Michael manuscript maintains a more elaborate and fuller textual tradition compared to the Ambrosiana, which shows a tendency towards abbreviation.

This may indicate that the Ambrosiana manuscript represents a transmission stage where content was condensed, either intentionally or through scribal error.

4. Omissions in Proper Names and Titles

The Ambrosiana manuscript frequently omits references to key figures, including the name «'Ēgzi'ābḥer» (God) and «'bā'iyāsus kərstos'» (in Jesus Christ).

Proper nouns related to historical and religious figures, such as «'Ēmāhaymānotākərstos» and

«bä'iyäsus k̄rstos'» are frequently missing, which could indicate either scribal errors, theological shifts, or intentional abbreviations.

Implications of the Omissions

1. Textual Transmission: The observed omissions suggest that the Ambrosiana manuscript underwent a different textual lineage, possibly through scribal redaction or textual loss over time.

2. Linguistic Evolution: Changes in lexical and morphological structures point to linguistic shifts over time, reflecting variations in spoken and written Ethiopic language traditions.

Why These Omissions Matter:

These omissions in the Ambrosiana manuscript suggest either a divergence in transmission or a possible scribal error. The differences between the two manuscripts highlight the complexity of preserving ancient texts. While the Mekele Michael M167 provides a more complete version, the Ambrosiana manuscript reflects an earlier form that might have evolved through different channels. For scholars, these variations are important as they can influence the interpretation of Saint Paul's Epistles.

Conclusion

The comparison between the base manuscript and the Ambrosiana manuscript (14th century) highlights a significant pattern of textual omissions and variations. The Ambrosiana manuscript exhibits numerous instances where words, phrases, and even entire sentences are missing compared to the base manuscript. These omissions are observed across multiple chapters of the Epistles of Saint Paul, affecting key theological, grammatical, and interpretative aspects of the text.

One of the most notable patterns in the Ambrosiana manuscript is the frequent omission of divine references, such as «'Īgzi'äbḥer» (God) and «bä'iyäsus k̄rstos» (in Jesus Christ). This suggests either a scribal tendency to abbreviate or a textual tradition that preserved a more condensed version of the epistles. Additionally, certain pronouns and connective words that contribute to the flow of the discourse are absent, which could imply either errors in transmission or deliberate editorial choices by the scribes of the Ambrosiana manuscript. The presence of these omissions raises important philological questions regarding the textual history of

the Ethiopic New Testament. It suggests that the Ambrosiana manuscript may not have been copied directly from the same textual tradition as the base manuscript. Instead, it may belong to a variant textual lineage that either simplified or altered the Pauline Epistles over time.

From a critical edition perspective, the base manuscript appears to preserve a fuller and more detailed version of the text, which aligns with established Ethiopic biblical traditions. The Mekele Michael manuscript (M167, 16th century), while younger than the Ambrosiana manuscript, might reflect a more complete textual tradition that retains details lost in earlier versions.

In general, the textual variations observed in the Ambrosiana manuscript emphasize the complexity of Ethiopic biblical transmission. The numerous omissions highlight the need for further comparative analysis among different manuscript traditions to reconstruct the most authentic version of the Pauline Epistles in Ethiopic Manuscripts. This study also underscores the importance of preserving and critically evaluating ancient manuscripts to understand the development and transmission of the biblical text in Ethiopia.

Moreover, the absence of certain words and phrases in the Ambrosiana manuscript can alter the understanding of key theological concepts. For instance, omissions of «έν Χριστῷ» (in Christ) weaken the emphasis on Christian identity, a theme central to Paul's writings.

Recommendation

Given the significant omissions found in the Ambrosiana manuscript, further scholarly attention should be directed towards compiling a more complete critical edition of the Epistles of Saint Paul. Researchers should consider cross-referencing additional ancient manuscripts to understand the full scope of textual variations and omissions. Furthermore, it is recommended that a more extensive comparison be made with other 14th- and 16th-century Ethiopic manuscripts to clarify the evolution of textual transmission. The inclusion of both the MaqalaMikael167 and Ambrosiana manuscripts, alongside others, will provide a more holistic view of the historical context and potential transmission errors, enhancing the accuracy of future critical editions.

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